

RURALities

Introduction

As a rurally based contemporary arts organisation, [Meadow Arts](#) has been exploring the complexities of our cultural, social, and environmental relationship to place and the landscape for almost two decades. The Covid-19 crisis put our curatorial programme on hold, which helped us to refocus our current practices - and respond to an ever-growing digital world and its relationship to the rural.

Rural landscapes are often defined by isolation, as results of the physical distances between places, poor transport links and lack of access to wider cultural provision, impacting the way people work and create together. Covid19 has intensified the isolation many rural artists and audiences feel and cut-off traditional access points to art, further impacting cultural venues. Through new partnerships, RURALities will bridge the gap between artistic communities, venues, and organisations through an exciting series of opportunities.

What is RURALities?

RURALities is a digital commission programme that will forge new regional partnerships, launch [Meadow Arts](#) first digital commissioning programme, and facilitate the production of new works for regional practitioners.

We invite artists to submit proposals for new digital works that respond to rural narratives and support rural practices within Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Worcestershire. Four commissions will amplify rural understanding and visibility through an interconnected exhibition series to be showcased online, in a printed format (to combat digital exclusion) and within partnered venues at [Worcestershire County Museum at Hartlebury Castle](#) and [Shrewsbury Museum and Art Gallery](#) –

potentially activating exciting pockets of their vast collections relating to rural history and life.

We are partnering with [Vivid Projects](#) in Birmingham to provide mentoring and support through the digital creative process and are offering three mentoring sessions throughout the project. Selected artists will be partnered with a digital mentor who will support them in 1-2-1 sessions that explore their work in progress.

[Vivid Projects](#) have been exploring the changing nature of the digital format in contemporary art through encouraging risk-taking and collaborative experimentation to create successive innovative and aware public programmes of events and exhibitions on and off-site, created in collaboration with artists, producers, thinkers, and researchers. This immense portfolio of work that interrogates and extends the digital through creative practice is why we are partnering with them to support our commissioned artists through their own creative processes.

What and who are we looking to support?

The digital works are not limited in their scope and can include any (and all) of the following:

- video
- film
- animation
- digital collage
- digital drawing
- performance
- audio/audio-visual art

If we have missed your digital medium off this list, do not be deterred from applying – we are open to all digital visual expressions! We want these commissions to cater to

new and established practices alike, so we will be open to accepting proposals that utilise the funding for new equipment or software to realise a new concept, facilitate new digital ways of working, or to access new places for site-specific works across Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire.

We encourage all artists and creative minds to apply, and especially welcome applications from artists who experience racism, neurodivergent artists, disabled artists and LGBTQIA+ artists. We want to increase the presence of under-represented voices throughout our programme and our wider work within the communities we serve.

What are we funding?

Four commissions are up for grabs, which will cover artist fees and production, as follows:

- One main commission of £4000, (£3,000 fee, £1,000 production costs)
- One medium commission of £2,500 each (£2,000 fee, £500 production costs)
- Two micro commissions of £1000 each (£800 fee, £200 production costs)

The above fee/production costs serve as guides, and we are happy to work through any suggestions that may be made to these with commissioned artists.

The final commissioned work will be expected by the beginning of March 2021, to be exhibited throughout the month of April 2021.

How to apply

To apply for RURALities, please submit the following to leanne@meadowarts.org before the end of the day on Thursday 3rd December 2020:

1. 500-word creative proposal or a 5-minute video which covers:

- How you would best utilise this commission opportunity and funding.
- Which county you are from; Herefordshire, Shropshire or Worcestershire, or if you are making work responding to rural themes.
- How this opportunity will impact your practice for the better.
- How you could activate your work within our partnered museums.
- Complete and return an equal opportunities form

2. A Creative CV and 5 examples of work that best represents your practice.

Alternatively, we will accept a 5-minute video that explores this.

If you have any specific questions or access requirements to assist you in your application, please contact leanne@meadowarts.org.